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ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED



We're not about subliminal messages to get our point across. We're much more overt. Take our diner scene. It's littered with the word "**Deliver**" throughout. How many instances of "Deliver" can you spot on the front and back covers?

12SUPOTH627

deliver®

a magazine for marketers



delivermagazine.com

Surround
customers
with your
message

EDITOR'S LETTER

PUT TO THE TEST



Check one ... check two ... Say, is this thing on? Ah, so it is. Nothing like a little test to make sure everything's working properly. To be sure, this same idea applies to direct marketing. With brands utilizing an ever-growing number of communications channels these days, it's increasingly difficult for multichannel marketers to determine which media are working.

With that in mind, we've decided to take a closer look at the power of testing your marketing campaigns ("Test for Success," p. 24). With budgets more heavily scrutinized these days, CMOs need to be able to have an iron-clad grasp on what's working among their campaigns.

One campaign that was absolutely working was the winner of the second annual *Deliver*® Marketing Achievement in Innovation and Leadership (M.A.I.L.) Award. Strategist Barbara Sibley put together an amazing multichannel campaign on behalf of a beauty salon chain based in Florida ("Winning with (Hair) Style," p. 14). We're elated about her win and salute her fantastic effort.

In addition, our own Gary Reblin of the U.S. Postal Service® provides an in-depth view of how technological innovation — from digital watermarks to QR Codes — is adding more muscle to an already-powerful direct mail channel. Speaking of technology, don't forget that the U.S. Postal Service is sponsoring its 2012 Mobile Commerce and Personalization Promotion in an effort to create more interest in the integration of mail and mobile technologies. Registration is open through Aug. 30. For more information, visit <https://ribbs.usps.gov/index.cfm?page=mobilebarcode>.

As always, there's more in our magazine aimed at helping you win more customers, boost your bottom line and hurdle your marketing challenges. Enjoy!

Thomas J. Foti, Editor

deliver®

a magazine for marketers

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ROY RITCHIE

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HUGH KRETSCHMER

DELIVERABLES

A BRIEF LOOK AT SOME BIG ISSUES
IN DIRECT MAIL

PROSPECTING

all Smiles

Dental practice grows clientele with family-friendly postcard campaign

Determined to bite off more business in 2011, Bonham Dental Arts in Largo, Fla., sank its teeth into a postcard campaign that continues to boost patronage at the family practice.

Disappointed with its previous direct marketer, Bonham Dental enlisted the PostcardMania direct marketing company to engineer a new mail campaign loaded with enticements. The face of Bonham's new 6- by 8.5-inch cards featured a photo of a tooth-some family framed by offers ranging from discounts for patients who refer friends to special promotions on Lumineers,® crowns, veneers and other services. The flipside offered coupons, including a \$99 new patient special on an adult cleaning with X-rays. The coupons were complemented by comforting messaging about Bonham's "No Pain, Low Anxiety Dental Treatment."

According to operations manager Alvin Middleton, Bonham mailed out 50,000 postcards, with campaign costs totaling about \$22,000. "Fortunately, we got one direct mail patient that returned that total investment in one treatment plan," Middleton says. "Our return on investment was over \$100,000 — a 5-to-1 rate."

By the end of the second fiscal quarter of 2011, Bonham had



attracted 47 new patients whose business the practice could attribute directly to its direct mail campaign. The campaign drew another 48 patients by the fourth quarter of that fiscal year.

For Bonham, the ongoing campaign has provided a lasting lesson in the effectiveness of intelligently conceived direct marketing. "Direct mail and our website continue to be our best ways to attract new patients," Middleton notes. "In this struggling economy, direct mail has helped us maintain a steady flow of new patients to our office, something many practices are struggling with today."

YOU
SHOULD
KNOW

MARKETING CONCEPTS AND "BIG IDEAS" WILL ALWAYS DRIVE CAMPAIGNS, BUT DIFFERENTIATION WILL EMERGE FROM OPTIMIZATION OF DATA, INSIGHT AND DELIVERY (VCP, TARGETED ADVERTISING, ETC.). Winterberry Group - "The Future of Direct Mail: Outlook 2011"

POSTINGS



BY THE NUMBERS

40%

Percentage of the world's mail volume that was handled by the U.S. Postal Service® in 2011.¹

10%

Percentage of B-to-B budgets that CMOs and other senior marketers allocated to direct mail last year.²

\$11.9 billion

Amount that DM marketers are expected to spend on data in 2012.³

17.2%

The portion of polled consumers who in 2009 said they would respond to a postcard ad or request for donation.⁴

167.9 billion

The number of pieces of mail processed by the U.S. Postal Service in 2011.⁴

PAPER

Print's Charming

New site promotes the power of mail and other paper products

North American paper manufacturer Domtar has grabbed media attention for an ad campaign and website (paperbecause.com), which stylishly makes the case for paper products. Included is a link — titled "Paper Is Purposeful" — that leads to content that touts the countless virtues of direct mail, including cost efficiency, measurability and trackability. The site points to a variety of recent studies, including a stat revealing that 81 percent of consumers still read or skim their advertising mail. The campaign appears to be working. Domtar earned kudos for its 1950s-style "Paper Because" print ads printed in a throwback issue of *Newsweek*.



MAIL VOLUME

VANILLA NICE

Banks increase credit card offers via straightforward mailings

The financial services industry has been generating some sweet direct marketing headlines lately. According to Mintel Comperemedia, banks have boosted direct mail shipments of "plain vanilla" credit card offers — i.e., cards with no annual fees or rewards. Such offers accounted for 30 percent of acquisition mail volume in Q4 2011, compared to just 13 percent in Q4 2010.



INTEGRATION



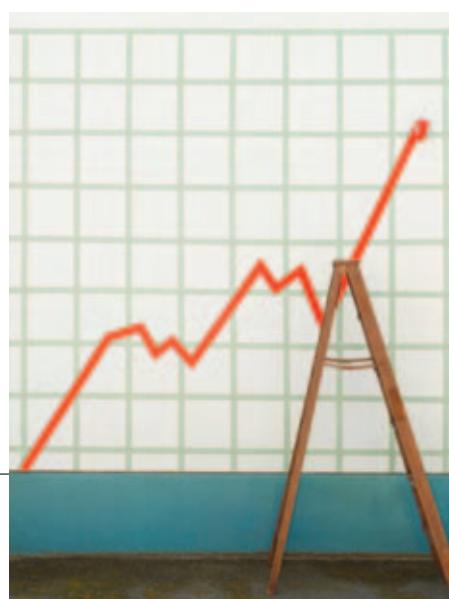
RESEARCH

A Vintage Year

Direct mail volume and expenditures grew in 2011

As the post-recession recovery continues, Georgia-based AccurateLeads direct marketing firm is partially attributing the direct mail surge to the ability of mail to couple with various digital channels, creating multichannel

initiatives that can efficiently saturate markets. According to new studies, consumers received 5 billion pieces of direct mail in 2011, compared to 3.6 billion in 2010. The Direct Marketing Association says expenditures for direct mail grew to more than \$50 billion in 2011, translating to a 4.6-percent industry increase. The DMA also forecasts that mail sales will continue to rise at a rate of 2.4 percent over the next two years.



TOP: RUBBERBALL/MIKE KEMP, RUBBERBALL PRODUCTIONS, GETTY IMAGES / BOTTOM: WALTER B. MCKENZIE, PHOTOGRAPHER'S CHOICE, GETTY IMAGES

TAG – you're it!

Marketing program leverages the interconnectedness of mail and social media

In some ways, marketing is a glorified game of "tag," with marketers tagging consumers with various offers and hoping those consumers likewise tag friends and family via word-of-mouth buzz. The SourceLink marketing firm hopes a new computer program will transform the concept into a mutually beneficial bargain for consumers and businesses alike.

SourceLink's TAG — short for "Targeted Account Generator" — elevates the tag concept by blending direct mail and digital. The process starts when TAG identifies select groups of "influencers" — i.e., shoppers who have demonstrated a knack for selling friends on new products and services. SourceLink then mails the influencers a postcard offer on behalf of an advertiser.

When the influencer visits the microsite referenced on the postcard, he or she is offered the opportunity to give friends and family the same offer through a link on social media sites. The sharing process allows exponentially greater exposure, with TAG gathering valuable data through the use of demographic questionnaires and polls.

SourceLink says that one national advertiser used TAG to produce a 280-percent lift in response, with 40 percent redemption. "TAG is an effective way to integrate the marketing message between both direct mail and digital," boasts Rich Pocock, vice president of Agency Services. "It really helps clients build their brand."



MULTICHANNEL MARKETING

Click Trick

Ricoh enhances print marketing with "Clickable Paper"

Seems the gulf separating traditional and digital marketing media narrows by the day. In what promises to be a boon for print marketers of all stripes, Ricoh recently demonstrated a new product that company officials have dubbed "Clickable Paper."

Described as a "new planned cross-media service," the product enables consumers to locate online content quickly and easily. All anyone has to do is point an iPhone or Android smartphone at any printed surface. From there, the customer will be dispatched to related web content.

Ricoh, one of the world's largest printing companies, claims the technology is applicable to any kind of printed media. Company representative are quick to point out its potential in direct mail, newspapers, magazines, books, brochures and posters.

What's more, Ricoh says that all types of digital information or services can be leveraged using Clickable Paper, as the app allows consumers to link to multimedia content, websites, e-commerce services and social networks.

Talking Heads

Business pros share SMART MARKETING SOLUTIONS

Shari Silberstein

Executive Director, Equal Justice USA

Brooklyn, New York

As part of its quarterly mailings, nonprofit social activist group Equal Justice sent 3,000 customized holiday cards to supporters at the end of 2011. The appeal doubled the anticipated funding. Says Silberstein: "We wouldn't survive without donations we get through the mail; it's also an important way that we send personalized, handwritten notes, photographs or stickers that help get the message out."



Terry Allen

CEO, 1016 Media

Dallas, Texas

As a local marketing company for the international "Real Men Cook" Father's Day Celebration, 1016 Media sought to increase preregistration in 2012, hoping to deliver early returns for sponsors. Targeting caterers, chefs and nonprofits, Allen this spring mailed 1,500 postcards with photos depicting food and fun: "We got 50 calls within a week. More than 20 caterers called to request information."

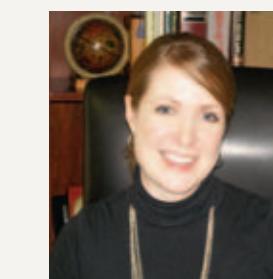


Melody Rouse

Marketing Director, Sheridan Realty & Auction Co.

Mason, Michigan

A 550-acre farm was the big-ticket item early this year, and Sheridan's job was attracting possible buyers. About 14,000 poster-size flyers were mailed, drawing 260 bidders from as far away as Texas and Florida. The auction's gross take was just short of \$2 million, says Rouse. "We are convinced that direct mail is one of the best ways to reach potential bidders," she adds.



Robert J. Lembach

Dentist

Fallston, Maryland

Seeking to attract new patients, Dr. Lembach reached out to PostcardMania. The company suggested a mailing list of couples and individuals, ages 28 to 55, with incomes at or over the \$50,000 mark. After a five-month blitz of 3,000 monthly postcard mailings, a payoff stream began late last year. "We're getting 20 new patients a month from the mailings," says Lembach.



Looking for more? Check out our Talking Heads section. It's a collection of smart solutions from big thinking marketers – delivermagazine.com/talkingheads/.



"The last thing a direct mail pro needs is for a profitable program to be deemed 'weak' because it fell short of some folkloric milestone."

Rebranding Direct Mail Success

All hail one of the most telling measures of marketing triumph: ROI.

Deliver® readers need no reminder that direct response mail is the original measurable form of advertising. Direct mail doesn't require inferring success from gains in awareness, recall and name recognition — nor does it offer that luxury. People either respond, or they don't. Should results disappoint, there is no place to hide. All the more reason to celebrate, even brag about, our stunning wins.

And brag we should — in press releases, our own direct mail, blogs and other forms of self-promotion. It's a great way to share what we learn, attract new clients and grow the industry. (In moments of unguarded candor, we might also admit to enjoying just a smidge of ego gratification.) Yet how we express our successes can undermine or enhance the brand perception of direct mail.

A time-honored practice is to express direct mail results in terms of percent-of-recipients-who-respond. It's not unusual for practitioners to say, "Our direct mail pulled a response of [whatever number] percent." This usually elicits a gasp of wonder, oft followed by an uninformed comment along the lines of, "That's great. I mean, I always heard that 3 percent" — or some other number — "is considered really good."

It can be tempting to affirm the number cited so as not to

ruin a rare moment of basking in unabated admiration. Yet there may be some benefit in setting the record straight instead.

A response is "good" only if it returns a profit. If you need a 3.25 percent response to break even, then 3 percent isn't so good. But if you break even with a response of just 0.01 percent, you could throw a party celebrating a 0.02 percent response.

Setting that particular record straight is no mere nod to pedantry. If you give standard status to an arbitrary number, you risk priming employers and clients to be disappointed, profitability aside, with anything less than that number. The last thing a direct mail pro needs is for a profitable program to be deemed "weak" because it fell short of some folkloric milestone.

So rather than expressing results in terms of percent-who-respond, show them in terms of Return On Investment (ROI). Suppose that a mailing of 200,000 pieces costing \$90,000 brings in 5,000 responses that account for \$100,000 in revenue. Consider how much more relevant, informative and compelling it is to say "the campaign earned an 11-percent net profit" than to say "it pulled a one-quarter percent response."

Trumpeting direct mail success is a good thing. But trumpeting that success in terms of ROI helps demonstrate the real power of direct mail — which, we submit, is an even better thing.

RYAN LANE, VETTA, GETTY IMAGES

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATIONS OF ARAB AMERICANS:¹

35% Catholic
24% Muslim
18% Orthodox
10% Protestant
13% Other

63%

of Arab Americans were born in the United States²



New York City, the first stop for millions of immigrants for more than a century, has the largest Arab population among U.S. cities: 69,985. The Detroit suburb of Dearborn, where many Arabs first settled to work in the automobile industry, is next at 29,181.³

Arab Americans generally have a strong commitment to family and economic and educational achievement, with **eighty-five** percent having a high school diploma or higher and more than **forty** percent earning a bachelor's degree or higher.²

82%

are U.S. citizens²

1 The Arab American Institute (aaiausa.org) 2 ameredia.com/resources/demographics/middle_eastern.html 3 MediaMorphosis, mmincweb.com

3.5 million

Estimated number of Americans who trace their roots to an Arab country.¹

60%

of working Arab Americans are executives, professionals, or office and sales staff²



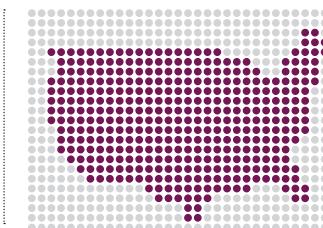
ARAB AMERICANS

Arab Americans offer a rich tapestry of cultural differences, including a variety of languages, religions, countries of origins, life experiences and time in this country.

"It can be extremely hard to reach them due to the complex nature of their lifestyles," explains Pinky Chakraborty, co-founder of MediaMorphosis, a multicultural marketing agency in New York City. "The years they have lived in this country do not necessarily determine their level of acculturation, so their level of interest in television and news related to their country of origin can vary tremendously."

Two keys to successfully marketing to Arab Americans — know your audience and use direct mail. "Clients have found direct mail to be the most effective tool in reaching them," says Chakraborty. "Use of the Arabic language and a call-out of countries can get immediate recognition from recipients." However, Chakraborty notes, not everyone of Arabic descent speaks the language, so use it only when needed.

Early Arab immigrants came from countries with large Christian populations. Newer arrivals come from heavily Muslim countries such as Iraq and Yemen.³



Almost half of the Arab Americans in the United States live in five states: California, New York, Michigan, New Jersey and Florida.³

“What other marketing channels do you mix with direct mail, and why?”



S

DANIEL OCNER*Director, Strategic Planning & Development, MediaMorphosis*

M

AIMÉE DODSON*Comptroller, New American Mortgage*

L

SUZIE BROWN*Executive Vice President, Sales and Marketing, Valassis*

The most effective channels to mix with direct mail are DRTV and e-mail marketing. Direct mail is ideal for allowing customers to feel comfortable with an offer. However, starting with a DRTV campaign can increase awareness and lead to targeted prospects investing more time in reading the mailing. It also can spur individuals who didn't respond immediately to go back and review it. On the other hand, e-mail marketing can give an effective heads-up to watch for a mail offer, as well as to remind customers to respond before an expiration date.

We start with relationships nurtured by the excellent work of our sales team and fortify them with ongoing direct mail campaigns. **We use social media as well as QuantumDigital's automated mailing program to schedule a different mail piece each month.** We can choose what mortgage product and message to feature and the exact audience for which that product is relevant. These extremely targeted efforts, combined with effective, personal follow-up, equal success for us. In 2011, we mailed 320,000 pieces, which resulted in a 480-percent return on investment.

Digital is becoming bigger for us, as deals and savings are now a part of consumers' regular shopping experience, and we expect digital deals will continue to evolve. They are gaining attention in the media and among consumers as interest in deal seeking increases. Just as consumers are exploring new ways to get a deal, marketers also are testing various methods to attract today's shopper. **There will continue to be a blend of traditional and new media as consumers seek value how, when and where they want.** There is room for everyone in the media mix, depending on marketers' objectives.

PORTRAITS BY GLUEKIT

Surprise Superhero

Innovations are making mail a platform for delivering experiences.



Gary Reblin is vice president of domestic products for the U.S. Postal Service.

digital watermark response was lower than the baseline, but that was probably because this technology is so new that many aren't as familiar with how it works.

This is exciting news for businesses because it demonstrates that adding digital innovations like these increases engagement and response. But it also points out that marketers must help consumers understand the value of these technologies in order for them to reach their full potential.

Mail is already effective at generating response among consumers — but these technologies have the possibility of making it even more powerful.

Try it yourself: Download the Digimarc Discover app at iTunes or Google Play and scan the image above to read more on how these technologies work.

Have you looked in your mailbox lately? If you have, then you no doubt have noticed there's an incredible amount of innovation going on. Your mail likely includes pieces that have mobile barcodes or audio chips or even the smell of fresh-cut grass.

I'm fascinated by all of this innovation in a channel that many feel is "old school" or stagnant. Clearly there's a revolution afoot, even if it doesn't get much press.

Mail is undergoing a metamorphosis, evolving from a channel used to deliver tactile messages to a platform that delivers experiences into people's homes.

Consider, for example, a catalog with mobile barcodes that let you view and order the product instantly. Or, mail from an auto company that lets you "test drive" a new vehicle through augmented reality.

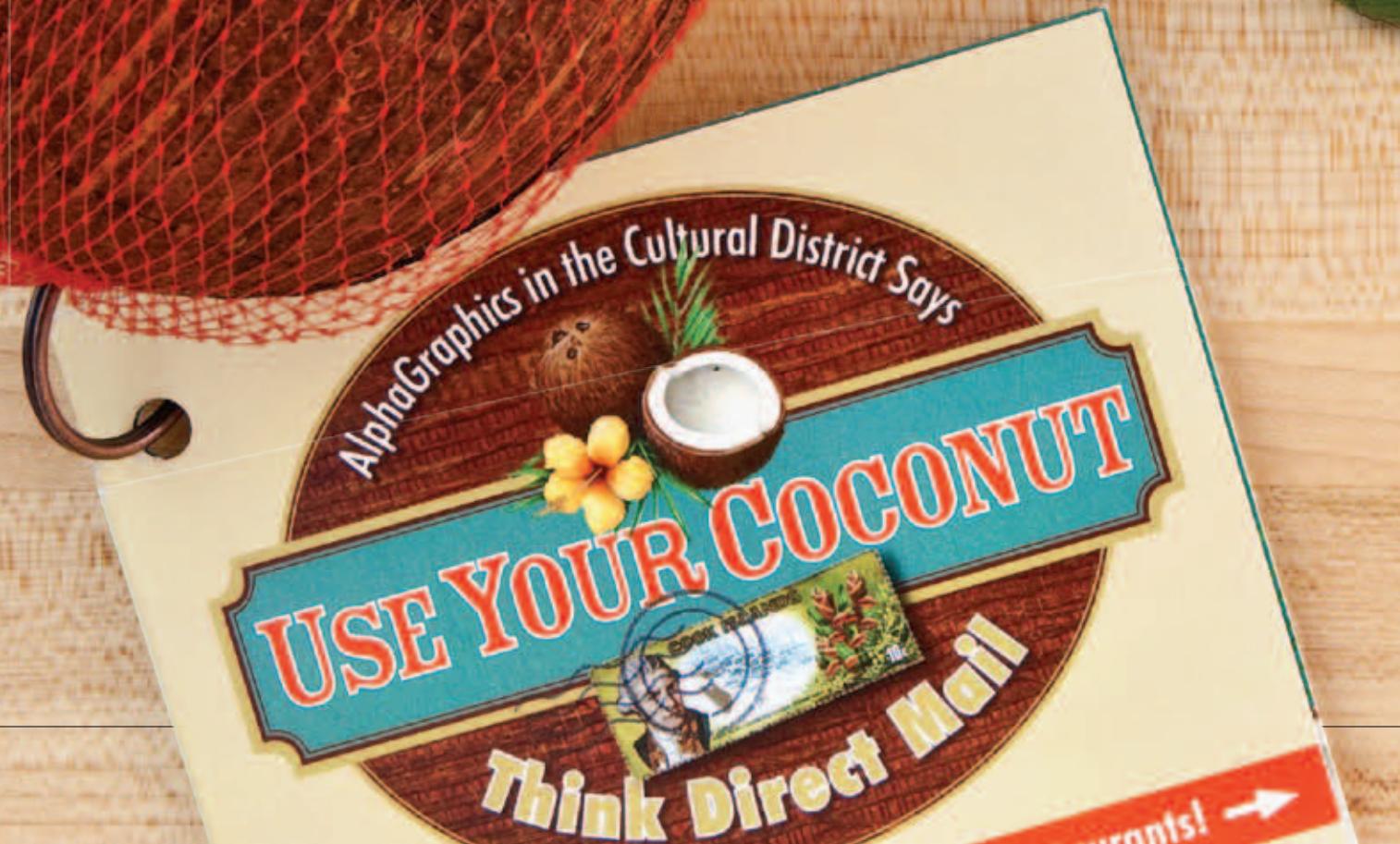
These innovations are changing the way we interact with brands and products. Of

Discover the value of adding digital innovations to mail by downloading our white paper at delivermagazine.com/strategy.

Going Coconuts

An offbeat mailer produces a huge ROI for noted marketing franchise.

// By Mindy Charski

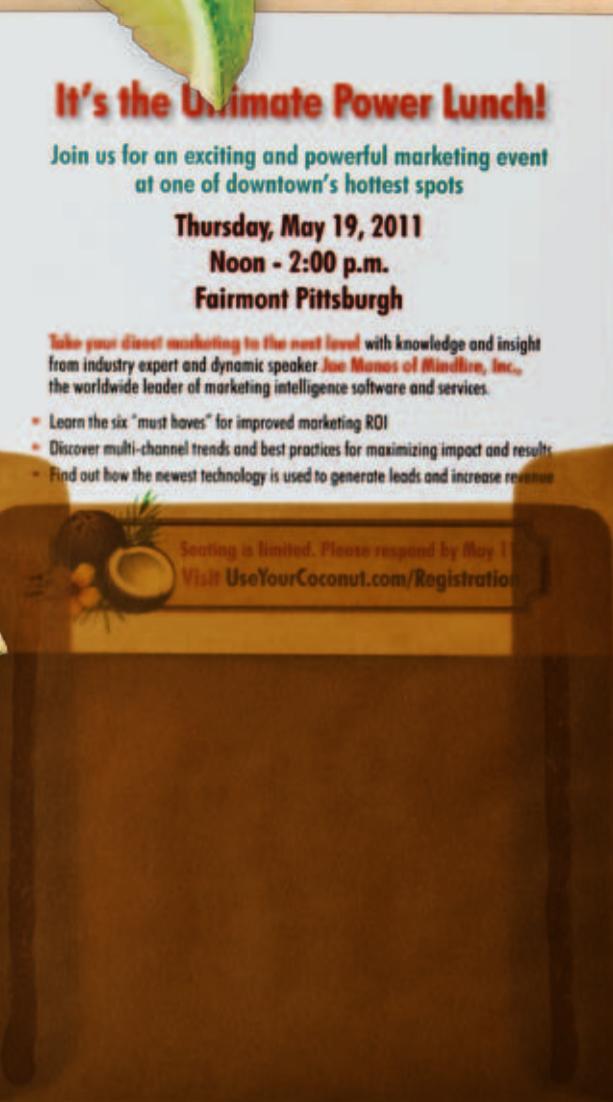


► Love dimensional mailers? Then check out Issue 1 of *Deliver®* for the tablet. You'll find innovative dimensional mail pieces that you can interact with: Take a John Deere tractor for a spin, or discover how a baseball bat hit one out of the park. Search "deliver mag" in the iTunes Store or visit delivermagazine.com/tablet.

T

he coconut may be good for the body, but, as AlphaGraphics in the Cultural District has discovered, the tropical delight can be pretty healthy for a marketing campaign, too. In April 2011, as part of an elaborate self-promotional campaign, the Pittsburgh franchise mailed coconuts to an assortment of local high-level marketing executives. "There's a wow factor," says Tracy Schneider, the company's design and marketing manager. "It's kind of hard to ignore a coconut. It really demonstrated the lengths that we go to get a message out."

The underlying message was as straightforward as the campaign was quirky: AlphaGraphics isn't just a printer — it's also a creative marketing partner. AlphaGraphics wanted to show how mail can play a robust role in an integrated campaign; the company also wanted to build awareness of its expanded offerings and mailing services.



The inspiration for the multitouch effort originated from a simple question asked by a staffer — "Did you know you can mail a coconut?" That set the firm's creative engines to churning. The theme that eventually emerged, "Use Your Coconut," was intended to be interpreted both literally and figuratively by its audience. The campaign was aimed at 200 high-value decision makers. Prospects were identified according to their companies' sales, whether they were current customers and by the amount of mailing services they used.

For the first phase, the marketers sent each person a coconut that was wrapped in nylon netting. Included was a personalized hangtag with the mailing information, factoids about the power of direct mail and a personalized URL. Two weeks later, AlphaGraphics followed up with a large, translucent envelope containing a brochure about mail trends. Those who didn't respond to phase one were again encouraged to visit their personalized website where they could be entered to win a "second-chance" gift certificate. Recipients who had filled out the phase-one survey also received a personalized letter of thanks.

Finally, about two weeks later, anyone who had responded to the first or second phases was mailed a coconut-themed invitation to an executive marketing workshop hosted by AlphaGraphics.

The campaign proved fruitful, with 41 percent of recipients completing the online survey after receiving the coconut. The first and second phases combined achieved a 46-percent response rate — more than double AlphaGraphics's initial goal — and 41 targets attended the workshop. "If we can't be successful with a campaign for ourselves, how are we going to be successful for our customers?" Schneider asks. "But we are risk takers here, and it worked out to our benefit. People are still talking about it."

THE ESSENTIALS:

Company: AlphaGraphics in the Cultural District (Pittsburgh, Pa.) **Agency:** In-house **Target Audience:** 200 local, high-value prospects and current clients. **Goal:** To drive targets to a personalized website, build a list of respondents to invite to a marketing event and generate leads for mailing services. **DM Vehicle:** A coconut weighing between one and two pounds that was sent in nylon netting and attached to a bi-fold hangtag that included the mailing information, factoids about direct mail and a personalized URL. **Response:** 41% of recipients completed the online survey after receiving the coconut. The overall integrated campaign generated a 300% ROI and has helped the business grow more than 20 percent since its launch.

© BENNINGER



SIBLEY SMART COPY WINS SECOND ANNUAL
DELIVER® M.A.I.L. AWARD IN A PHOTO FINISH

Winning with **HAIR** **STYLE**

BY JIM
MCFARLIN

PHOTOGRAPHY
BY MARTHA
CAMARILLO

A A

An eye-catching, wildly successful direct mail campaign that comes in under budget and generates nearly \$60,000 in revenue is a thing of beauty. And for veteran marketing strategist Barbara Sibley and the independent contractors who formed her production team, the joy forever will be knowing that their combined efforts on behalf of a Florida beauty salon chain have earned them *Deliver*® magazine's grand prize in our second annual Marketing Achievement in Innovation and Leadership (M.A.I.L.) Award.

"It's huge," enthuses Sibley, who operates her one-woman company Sibley Smart Copy out of her home office in Newtown, Conn., about her national M.A.I.L. recognition. "It validates the power of direct mail." Sibley won the award for the mailer's catchy blend of creativity, modernity and undeniable effectiveness in moving its targets to action.

The campaign — done for Florida-based iStudio Salons, a growing chain of salon "communities" — had three specific goals: introduce beauty professionals to the unique iStudio concept and its benefits; motivate the target audience to book an iStudio tour or visit its personalized URL; and generate a list of prospects for future targeting. Direct mail was selected as the primary vehicle to achieve these objectives — not that the client needed any arm-twisting.

"James Schregardus, one of the cofounders of iStudio, is a fearless marketer, and he loves direct mail," Sibley says. "He found in his other business ventures that his strongest leads and conversions came from direct mail. So by the time he jumped into iStudio he was already a huge believer."

The 923 photo mailers, budgeted at \$4,000 for photo development, pre-production, printing, handwritten personalization, assembly and mailing, came in at a total cost of \$3,738, (\$4.05 per piece), generated a 4.7-percent phone and PURL response and, most important, resulted in four signed iStudio lease agreements totaling \$59,280. What's more, the visual nature of the mailer will translate well as iStudio looks to expand to Hispanic targets in Florida.

Sibley, who has led marketing initiatives for large corporate clients over a career spanning 18 years, says that she has remained committed to keeping mail in her marketing mix, despite the emergence of other channels: "So many of my contemporaries and colleagues in marketing are really focused on getting their digital efforts fine-tuned. I don't want to downplay the importance of that because I'm doing it, too." Still, she says, she continues to believe deeply in mail — a passion that contributed to her M.A.I.L. Award win.

The M.A.I.L. Award was conceived to celebrate the nation's most innovative and powerful direct mail concepts as judged by a panel of marketing experts. Jason Mlicki, president of the Ohio-based firm Mlicki that captured the inaugural



"ONE OF THE COFOUNDERS OF iSTUDIO IS A FEARLESS MARKETER, AND HE LOVES DIRECT MAIL. HE FOUND IN HIS OTHER BUSINESSES THAT HIS STRONGEST LEADS AND CONVERSIONS CAME FROM MAIL."

— BARBARA SIBLEY



THE WINNER:
An envelope of stylish photographs leads to fame — not to mention fabulous ROI.

M.A.I.L. Award, served as one of this year's judges, selecting three finalists out of entries submitted from across the country (see sidebar). As the grand prize winner, Sibley received an expense-paid trip to Orlando April 1 through April 4 to present the top direct mailer at the National Postal Forum.

In some ways, she was returning to the territory that had led to her M.A.I.L. Award triumph. Last year, Sibley Smart Copy was tasked by iStudio Salons to generate leads for a new location in the College Park section of Orlando. In the iStudio business plan, hair stylists, nail technicians, aestheticians and other beauty professionals lease private space in a building filled with individual suites, as opposed to the traditional model of renting a booth or chair from a salon owner and paying a percentage of their income to the proprietor.

iStudio had already achieved significant success in 2010 launching its flagship salon in Maitland, Fla., mailing a personalized tearsheet announcement that looked as if it had been ripped from a newspaper. Schregardus and Sibley added a second tactic to the campaign for the next iStudio Salons

in Dr. Phillips, Fla. — a personalized "Smile Card" that invited prospects to take a tour and receive a \$50 coffee shop card.

For the College Park, Fla., salon, Schregardus and Sibley asked how they could reach all of the prospects who hadn't been touched.

So a third mailer — the M.A.I.L. winner — was devised: a packet of photos depicting the pitfalls of conventional salons and how iStudio can be the alternative. Sibley assembled a team of professionals with whom she had worked previously to accomplish the task. In the end, the mailer looked like an envelope of prints from a processor.

Sibley is busy working on the next mailing for iStudio Salons and her other clients. It's a gratifying time for the marketer, who's celebrating her fifth anniversary heading her own business. Says Sibley: "What this [award] does is validate my belief and my client's belief that, if you really want to drive leads and conversions and eventually sales to a physical location, direct mail is still the best way to go." **d**

"WHAT THIS AWARD DOES IS VALIDATE MY BELIEF AND MY CLIENT'S BELIEF THAT, IF YOU REALLY WANT TO DRIVE LEADS AND CONVERSIONS AND EVENTUALLY SALES TO A PHYSICAL LOCATION, DIRECT MAIL IS STILL THE BEST WAY TO GO."

— BARBARA SIBLEY



NEXT IN LINE

A LOOK AT OUR FIRST-PRIZE WINNERS

INFINITY DIRECT PLYMOUTH, MINNESOTA "DR. GARMONT'S MAGICAL MARKETING MAILER"

Calling Dr. Garmont! To increase awareness of Infinity Direct while emphasizing the company's ability to build a brand, the marketing firm created a fictional, old-time character, the mysterious Dr. Garmont, who practically invented direct marketing and possesses the knowledge and experience to cure any client's marketing ills.

- An initial direct mail piece, designed to look like a well-worn doctor's bag, included a PURL.
- Mailing activated a triggered e-mail campaign and directed recipients to a targeted website containing a movie and an interactive game.

Volume: 1,500

Cost: \$19,615

Results: A 17.25 percent response rate, based upon visits to the Infinity Direct microsite



McCULLOUGH CREATIVE DUBUQUE, IOWA

"THEY GOT WHAT THEY WANTED"

Supporting the successful launch of a new line of John Deere excavating equipment while trying to dispel consumer concerns over new emission standards, McCullough created a telescoping direct mail piece directing recipients to a microsite address or to an enclosed Business Reply Mail® card.

- Once at the microsite, potential customers could access video testimonials, machine specs, a magazine article and a "build sheet" to custom order a new excavator.
- Because direct mail remains the preferred response vehicle with this campaign's demographic, respondents also could request additional information or a premium item via the Business Reply Mail card tipped into the piece.

Volume: 16,800

Incentive: Choice of a John Deere tape measure or flashlight to recipients requesting more information

Cost: \$37,800 (\$2.25 per piece)

Results: 2 percent response rate; 42 qualified leads driven to independent John Deere dealerships.

OUR JUDGES

Submissions were judged by *Deliver* editors Thomas J. Foti and Lori Brown Savage, magazine staff members and marketing experts Jason Mlicki and Ethan Boldt.

Mlicki is president and lead strategist for Mlicki, the eponymous agency that won the first *Deliver* M.A.I.L. Award last year.

Boldt is chief content officer for DirectMarketingIQ and editor-in-chief of *Inside Direct Mail Weekly*, an e-newsletter for the direct mail industry.

Building a Buzz

by
Allan
Nahajewski

Author,
Gen Y expert
shares insights
to help marketers
connect with
a new generation
of customers.

As the founder and CEO of Buzz Marketing Group, Tina Wells has made it her business to keep her finger on the pulse of the "Millennial" generation. As the author of *Chasing Youth Culture and Getting It Right* — a leading field guide on understanding this increasingly influential demographic group — Wells is trying to help CMOs make Millennials (those born between 1985 and 2004) their business as well.

The stakes, of course, are huge. Millennials — also known as Gen Y — represent a \$43-billion market, so getting it right with this generation of consumers can make or break a business.

We asked Wells to share her perspectives and insights on Millennials, marketing and mail.

TYPE ILLUSTRATIONS BY DEBASER



DELIVER: Beyond the obvious, what should marketers know about Millennials?

WELLS: This may sound obvious, but so many marketers miss the fact that technology is the language of the Millennial generation — and I do include myself in that group; I'm 32. We've all learned to speak this language. We speak it fluently. Everything we do, everything we talk about — it all has a tech piece to it. Marketers need to understand that. For example, some magazines are learning that their iPad app is the most important part of their brand. All of the magazines that I receive today, I also receive on my iPad. It's convenient for traveling.

Now, some traditionalists may freak out and think that technology is replacing everything. It's not. It's just a different language that Millennials are choosing to speak.

DELIVER: What role does direct mail best play in reaching Millennials?

WELLS: It's an interesting situation: Because technology is playing such a key role in young people's lives, the need for personal communication is even greater. There's also a greater need for the tangible, touchable, real-life communication — which is the strength of direct mail. All of that stuff still really matters. There is such a thing as technology overload. If anything, mail is more welcome. It can counterbalance the tech side.

Interestingly, I wrote a children's book about a 12-year-old girl named Mackenzie Blue. In the book, she talks about how she loves getting mail from her friends — and sending mail to her friends. It's an important part of her life.

DELIVER: Do you think Millennials like getting mail even more than older people do?

WELLS: Yes. I've learned in my research that what may seem to be obvious may, in fact, not even be true. For example, some people will talk about young people's obsession with tech devices, but on the whole, their relationship with technology is generally healthy and proper. Because they grew up with it, they know when to stop, when to put it down and when it's time for other forms of communication. It's the people who did not grow up with it that tend to develop obsessive behaviors.

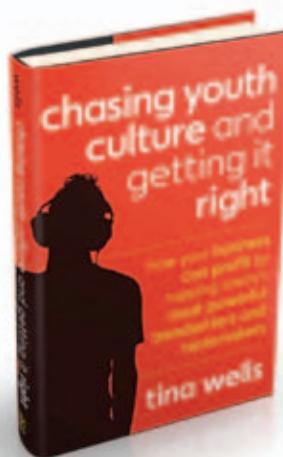
Technology is a luxury that many Millennials take for granted, but it doesn't rule their lives. Mail is a part of their lives as well — although to some that may seem counterintuitive.

DELIVER: Tell us about the four main tribes of Millennials, specifically why marketers need to know about them.

WELLS: Millennials are not all alike. To view a generation as a single entity is a marketing misstep. Based on psychographics and behaviors, Millennials best fit into four different groups or, as we call them, "tribes": the Wired Techie, the Conformist but Somewhat Paradoxical Preppie, the Cutting-Edge Independent, and the Always Mellow Alternative.

The Techies are like the nerds of yesteryear. The people that no one talked to are now the coolest kids in school because everyone is interested in technology. They're really setting trends so it's important for marketers to look at how best to engage with them.

The Preppie is the big-man-on-campus type, the captain of the basketball



BY THE BOOK:
A highly sought-after author, Wells has published insights on Generation Y consumers that are helping CMOs learn the unwritten rules to reaching the elusive Millennial market.



'Y' MARKETERS SHOULD CARE

CHECK OUT OUR WEB-EXCLUSIVE STORY ON HOW DIRECT MAIL LEAVES A LASTING IMPRESSION ON GENERATION Y AT DELIVERMAGAZINE.COM/Y

team, the one who knows everyone and is friendly with everybody.

The Independents are always going to do their own thing. Whatever the mainstream is about, the independent leans toward the opposite.

Alternatives are looking for something different, too, but not exactly opposite. For example, Alternatives years ago put the focus on going green, organic and sustainable. To this group, if you're not one of those things, you don't matter.

Learn as much as possible about who your customers really are, what they want. Do they even want your product? Does it cause any problems for them? Once we get all the answers to these questions, we can figure out where they are and engage with them. That's probably the most important takeaway I can offer.

DELIVER: Any specific examples of effective direct mail campaigns targeting Millennials?

WELLS: Those who don't think that mail and Millennials mix should consider a tween clothing retailer that ships about 11 million catalogs a month — or rather, "catazines" — half catalog, half magazine. These seem to do really, really well.

At Buzz Marketing, we've found great success with direct mail, especially reaching younger Millennials. And some fashion and celebrity gossip magazines aimed at teens use mail well as part of their marketing. Polybagging with calendars, for example, has been well received. By doing this, they've used mail to add value to the magazine subscriptions and get across a branding message.

What's exciting about Web 2.0 is that technology that used to cost so much money — content management systems, building a website — now it's free. And when you integrate these tools with direct mail — when you combine high tech with high touch — you're on the path to making strong connections.

DELIVER: What trends do you see with Millennials? What's in their future?

WELLS: One trend we're looking at now is employment. This is a generation of kids who are not convinced that they have to go to work for somebody else. They have watched their parents work their whole lives for big companies, but there have been so many examples of entrepreneurs being successful at a young age — even college dropouts — it's changing perceptions and expectations.

Also, this is a generation that knows how to shop online and to hunt for the best deal. It's no longer about going into a store and buying whatever is on sale. We are seeing those trends right now, with more than \$1 billion of business being done on Cyber Monday. People are enjoying their holiday shopping from the comfort of their own couch.

DELIVER: What can we expect five years from now?

WELLS: Technology will continue to evolve with newer and better devices. But there will still be a role for mail and print and personal communications.

Some technology takes time to take hold. We've found that only 20 percent of Millennials know what QR Codes are and know how to use them. A couple of years from now, I expect it will be an entirely different story.

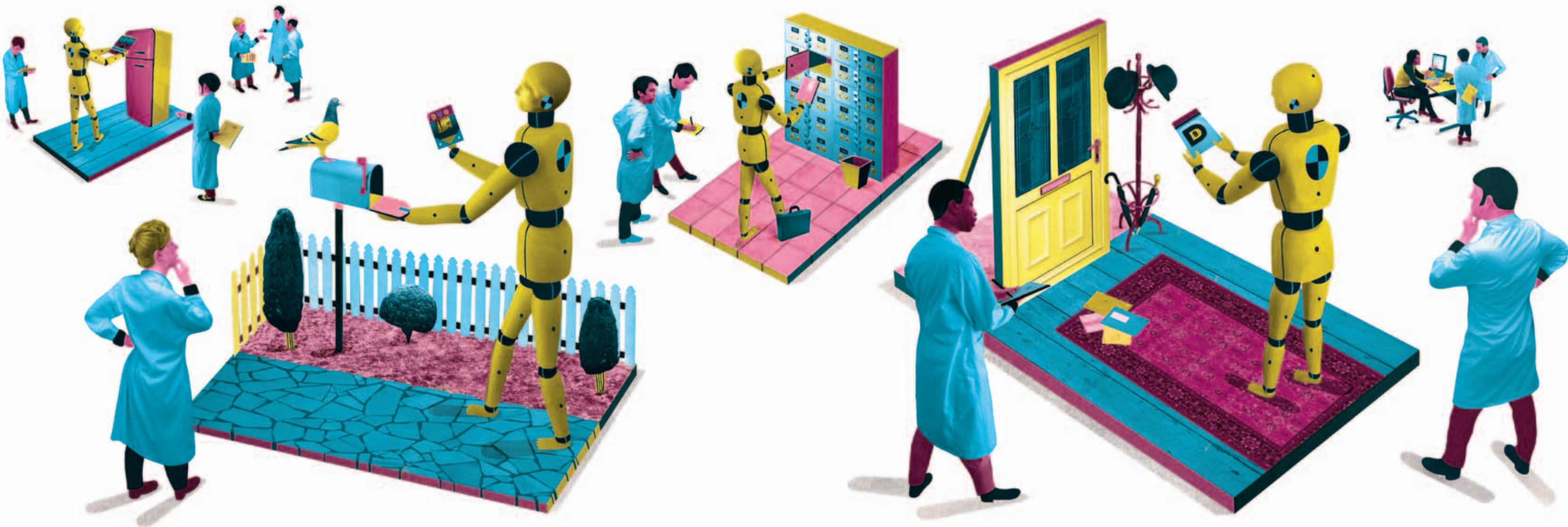
DELIVER: Any final thoughts on Millennials, marketing and mail?

WELLS: Sure. My conclusion is that young people get so many brand messages a day that a brand needs to use as many channels as it can. That definitely includes mail — for both older and younger Millennials, especially older Millennials.

Mail crosses all generations.

Youth must be served! Getting a jump on understanding the generation coming up behind the Millennials.

Ask any parent: Staying on top of youth trends is not easy. Tina Wells has found a way. In fact, she publishes a monthly "Tina's Top Ten" e-zine that reports on the hottest trends in fashion, beauty, entertainment and lifestyles. How does she do it? Part of the answer is having a team of 9,000 young people, called the "buzzSpotter®" network, provide a stream of "youth intelligence." They share input through surveys, polls, focus groups and interviews. The network formed when a teen girl magazine wrote a feature on Tina's Buzz Marketing Group, resulting in 15,000 applications from around the world. The buzzSpotter® network is just part of the company's research efforts, which also include a Buzz Youth Institute panel of trendsetters, psychologists and sociologists. The company also conducts a quarterly Blue Pulse survey and partners with other companies to access general market research trends.



TESTING FOR SUCCESS

Despite shrinking budgets and increasing costs, marketers continue to find campaign testing an indispensable tool for success. And they're mixing classic measurement techniques with the new to get the job done.

BY SHARON M. GOLDMAN | ILLUSTRATIONS BY PHIL WRIGGLESWORTH



hen marketers discuss how direct mail fits into their overall campaign efforts, it is often described as the “workhorse” — dependable, reliable and effective; the channel that guarantees a tactile piece of marketing material will reach a prospect’s mailbox. For Kurt Konow, a Chicago marketing strategist at Ricoh, a global technology company, that is certainly true.

Konow says that direct mail remains a vital component of every marketing campaign he works on. But as the economy has struggled over the last few years and budgets have been squeezed, marketers like Konow are more pressed than ever to prove the viability of direct marketing and its many channels. And marketers these days, more than ever, are rising to the test. Literally.

In an age of multiple mailings, integrated campaigns and shifting audiences, some marketers are finding it more essential than ever to test the efficacy of their marketing. And they are leveraging a wide array of tools to figure out just how well their campaigns are faring and how to refine those campaigns along the way. “It’s more important than ever to show the physical piece is still bringing in returns, that you’re getting people to respond and converting people with your message and offer — because it’s often the first thing to be eliminated,” says Konow, who estimates that he sends out a half-dozen

direct mail campaigns each month to both B-to-C and B-to-B prospects. In order to offer that solid proof to the powers-that-be, he emphasizes, testing of direct mail results is “critical.”

Testing has been central to the direct marketer’s role for decades, of course, as companies work to ideally attain the highest response and conversion rates possible without maxing their budgets. Any number of testing tactics persist, from database and reporting interfaces and data analysis to test mailings that gauge the response of everything from the mailing list, the offer, the messaging, the type of package and even the kind of stamp. Classic testing techniques include A/B splits (in which a baseline control mail sample is tested against several single-variable changed options), and multivariate testing (in which multiple design elements are changed at the same time), as well as list segment testing. And all of it may be going on at the same time for various campaigns, says Renee Mezzanotte, executive vice president of client services at DMW Direct, a direct response advertising agency in Chesterbrook, Pa.

“We’re always testing variables with our clients — we’re never satisfied with the status quo,” she explains. “There’s an expense tied to testing, and marketers can be fearful of that, but you need to prove the performance of a piece because there’s definitely more eyes on DM than practically any other part of the budget.”

CHANGES TO THE TEST

While direct mail remains a solid foundation for many marketers, times are changing both in terms of campaign structure and the back-end testing of results. With a proliferation of other marketing channels, some of which are still in a nascent evolution (such as social media and mobile) and others which have

matured in recent years (such as e-mail and online advertising), today’s campaigns tend to be multichannel and holistic with a variety of response options — from e-mail, QR Codes and PURLs to simple toll-free numbers and in-person walk-ins, not to mention social media communications and text messaging.

When it comes to testing the success or failure of such multi-layered campaigns, however, the vast possibilities have amplified confusion among marketers regarding the what, why and how of direct mail tests and created what experts describe as a combined sense of opportunity and a feeling of being completely overwhelmed. “The variables have broadened, with far more channels to look at,” says David Henkel, president of Johnson & Quin, a full-service direct mail production company based near Chicago. “There is just so much more to test, and without discipline by the entire organization, there can be a lot of missed opportunities in terms of understanding response.” And that includes the success of both the direct mail piece and the overall campaign.

Taking action in response to test results can be challenging as well, he adds, as marketing staffs have been downsized in response to budget cuts. “There’s a pressure to show evidence of direct mail success, but there are fewer of the folks who would traditionally be able to analyze and take action on the information,” he says.

However, sophisticated and creative marketers willing to invest the money and manpower are doing innovative tests and experiments that take an out-of-the-box approach to measuring response and results, says DMW’s Mezzanotte. “We’re testing in terms of creative positioning, different incentives, one-step packages versus lead generation, and even taking chances on concept testing,” she explains. “For instance, a national insurance company we work with had a sales force trying to connect with a small audience of credit union C-suite executives such as vice presidents of membership benefits and CFOs. We developed a warming campaign that included

something oversized but not over-the-top in terms of budget. It had a little tactile-ness, but it cost only \$5 in the mail.”

A personalized postcard was sent as a follow-up, and the company evaluated both soft and hard measurements. “Because the messaging was strong and a little different, the salespeople said every person they called and spoke to knew the piece and it helped them a bit more,” adds Mezzanotte.

Carolyn Goodman — president of Goodman Marketing Partners, a multichannel direct response company in San Rafael, Calif. — says clients are beginning to turn their attention to testing communication nuances such as color, and addressing predictive modeling. Both areas are common in online campaign testing but far less common off-line because of the increased cost. “Sophisticated marketers are learning and growing all the time and testing more subtle variables while seeing dramatic gains in results,” she says. “I definitely think testing should be a staple in the direct marketing arsenal, regardless of channel.”

STAYING DISCIPLINED AND FOLLOWING UP

The majority of marketers work hard to improve and refine their mail campaigns, even in the face of challenges. For example, Penny Ransom, vice president of strategic planning and brand management for Network Health, a Wisconsin-based health insurance provider, constantly strives to test and improve the company’s mailings that peak in the fall selling season.

“We’ve become sensitive to that fact that one message might be appropriate for one county but they might not respond to it in another area,” she explains. For example, a travel benefit might be important to one population that tends to get away from Wisconsin winters, but another less affluent area might respond more to what doctors are in the network. Testing allows Ransom and her colleagues to determine which copy points have the most influence and which offers work best for which audiences.



UPON CLOSER EXAMINATION

How testing helped one marketing agency hone a client’s campaign to achieve optimum impact.

Recently, marketer DMW Direct was approached by an insurance industry client offering an ancillary health insurance product (that is, a program other than its major medical offerings). The client wanted to test the idea of marketing directly to the consumer rather than simply selling group plans to employers, recalls DMW Direct spokeswoman Renee Mezzanotte. “We decided to just

go out to a couple of states first and see how it would work,” she says.

The client tested two different packages that they sent to former group plan members who had lapsed — one was a simple informational package with a plain envelope and a two-page letter, while the other was a more colorful promotional package that included a brochure and looked like a classic direct mail piece. “You just never know what will work until you go out,” says Mezzanotte. The company tracked the response all the way up to actual sales, and also tested the online element (recipients could respond for enrollment both online and on the phone).

The results were clear: The informational

package performed far better — two to three times better in terms of response rate as well as conversions. “It’s possible that the informational package, which didn’t include the brochure, caused people to have to call or go to the website to get more information, which in turn made them more likely to convert,” says Mezzanotte. “It could be the promotional package had too much information — it’s always tricky to figure out how much information you need to include in order to get a good, qualified lead.”

The company took the lessons learned from the direct mail test and used it successfully for the broad market. They were also able to use the tested messaging for a search campaign.

Insurance marketer Tim Bannon finds that the mailing list is also an essential testing element. "We sell to a very finite niche of educators and administrators, so copy points are key — but the quality of the list is also essential because we're trying to find the specific universe of people we want," says Bannon, head of sales and marketing for Meemic, a Michigan-based insurance company that provides auto, homeowner and other coverage to teachers and other educational employees. "We also test lists we can acquire, lists for educational and other types of organizations. It is an ongoing and recurring process to improve our lists to this niche segment."

For Bannon, the biggest overall challenge in terms of direct mail testing is how to follow up on successful results. "We're all focused on bringing in business, but for the most part we don't have a way to go back to those households to welcome them, to cross-sell, or to seek a referral," he says. "We are testing prescribed, cross-channel contact to new households by customer segment so we retain and grow these new relationships."

Both Ransom and Bannon say their multichannel efforts are still in their infancy, while traditional direct mail campaigns are their bread and butter. Konow, on the other hand, says Ricoh's integrated, multichannel campaigns — including e-mail, Facebook and mobile — add the complications of proper campaign sequencing and channel-response testing layered on top of the challenging variables of lists, copy and offers.

"I'm a big believer in integrated campaigns, but you need to test your sequence as well as ensure that you're varying the message for each piece," he says. "Perhaps one time you push the e-mail out first followed by the direct mail piece, or another time you push the mobile marketing message first. The problem is that marketers will typically begin every campaign with the direct mail piece. However, when the sequence is changed, then you need to change the message on the direct mail piece slightly to test which channel and message is working best."

MISTAKES THAT MUDDLE

While modern marketers may face new challenges in today's multichannel universe, however, all-too-common mistakes still plague mailers when it comes to testing.

One of the most common missteps, says Mezzanotte, is not keeping your attention on why you're testing in the first place. "You can get really tied up in minutiae, so you have to think about whether what you're testing is really going to move the needle," she says.

Leaping to wrong conclusions is also a classic direct mail testing error, explains Goodman, of Goodman Marketing Partners: "Someone will look at two mail campaigns and insist one type of creative did better than the other, but it turned out they were mailed at different times of the year. So how do you know it was the creative and not the timing?" She also cites the example of a marketer insisting a postcard did better than a No. 10 envelope. However, the creative strategy was different for each piece. "It all goes back to setting up the test properly," she says.



REFINING THE APPROACH

Direct marketing experts agree that mailers have a long way to go in terms of elevating testing into a true feedback loop that moves toward true long-term, one-to-one marketing with personalization and relevance and that takes full advantage of testing results. "So much depends on the size and resources and sophistication of the company, as well as the intentions of the marketing leadership and whether they are really operating more instinctively than scientifically," says Johnson & Quin's Henkel.

"We're learning and get better with each campaign we do," says Meemic's Bannon. "Have all of them been home run balls? No — but that's why you test in the first place."

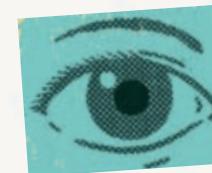
For Ricoh's Konow, that striving for improvement has turned into a resolution to do more campaign testing in 2012. "I'm going to continue integrated campaigns but be more critical about how many channels and paths I take — you don't have to push everything out in every channel," he says. "I want to stand back and be more selective."

In the meantime, marketers will continue testing their lists, copy, offers and mailers, because, Mezzanotte points out: "Direct mail remains the channel that often has the best ROI. Because it works, we test to make sure it works its hardest."

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In the summer of 2010 Nufarm, a leading international manufacturer of crop protection products, found itself in a tight spot. The Chicago-area company had just launched generic wheat seed treatment products it needed to push.

In agribusiness, seed treatment, which fends off fungi and other pests, is a highly specialized growth industry. The seeds are coated prior to planting. Nufarm officials say this approach to planting reduces the need for spraying fungicides and insecticides on emerged plants and could save farmers as much as \$60 an acre. It also shaves costs off of expenses like renting airplanes to help with the spraying. "It is a proactive, preventative practice," says Nathan Wright, director of sales for seed treatment at Nufarm. "It's good insurance upfront."

Problem was, Nufarm had only two salespeople assigned to pitch this product in its primary target market area, a swath of the continent that encompasses more than 10 large states and stretches from North Dakota to Texas to the Rockies. Further, both salespeople were relatively new and had had little or no time to develop large numbers of prospects in the market.

LEFT: SIEDE PREIS, PHOTODISC, GETTY IMAGES / RIGHT: PBNJ PRODUCTIONS, BLEND IMAGES, JUPITER IMAGES



AGRIBUSINESS LEADER NUFARM USES MIXED MEDIA CAMPAIGN TO IDENTIFY SALES PROSPECTS

Cultivating Contacts

by Lekan Oguntoyinbo



The mailings got smaller with each successive wave. The second postcard carried a message that addressed the recipient by name and added "Your seed is waiting." The third told the recipient that the opportunity "won't last."

"People who participated in rounds two and three probably wanted to participate after the first direct mail card but needed a reminder," says Sherry Mitchell, marketing director of Laser Image Printing & Marketing, a Durham, N.C.-based printing and marketing company that handled the campaign's microsite design as well as printing and mailing. "This is typical for direct mail campaigns: the second and third mailings are reminders."

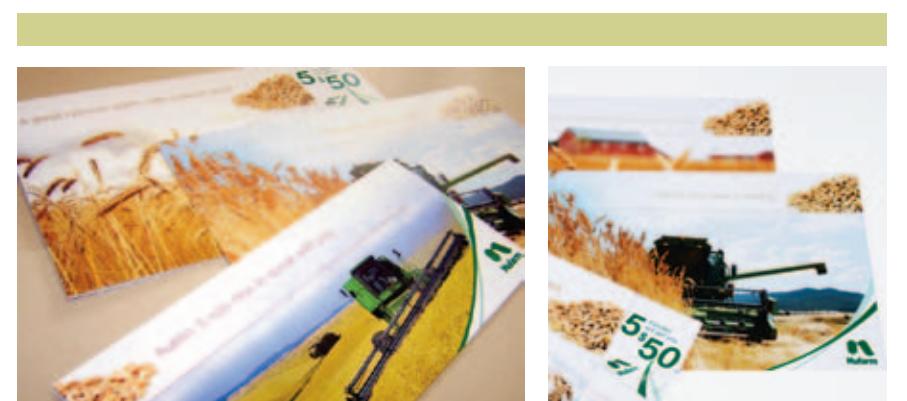
In the end, the \$6,500 campaign got Nufarm — and its new salespeople — off to a good start with the seed treatment products in this market. Nearly 6 percent of the recipients visited their microsites and 4.5 percent answered the survey questions and agreed to a visit from a Nufarm sales representative. As a result of the survey responses, Nufarm representatives got more than 60 promising sales leads.

Mitchell says the campaign's strategy of setting its sights on targeted prospects was a major contributor to its success. "This campaign had the right combination of elements," she says. "It had a targeted list, a clear and relevant message with a strong call to action and a well-designed and well-printed piece."

Rund figures that attaining this level of success without direct mail would have been impossible. "We use a lot of different tools, but direct mail for this market is the cornerstone," he says, adding that in this kind of business direct mail is more likely to generate responses than e-mail or other forms of communication like radio or television advertising.

The wide dispersal of potential clients, the technical nature of the product and the relatively low cost of the campaign, he explains, made direct mail the ideal fit for this campaign.

"The nature of what we sell lends itself to a direct mail platform," Rund says. "This is primarily a business sell. If you're getting direct mail in a business context, you're probably more likely to take a look at it." 



TASTYART LTD ROB WHITE, PHOTOLIBRARY, GETTY IMAGES

PLANTING THE SEED: Nufarm combined postcards, personalized URLs and a gift card incentive to grow its business, getting 4.5 percent of recipients to agree to meet with a sales rep.

On top of all this, winter wheat planting season was just a couple of months away, so Nufarm knew it needed to get the word out about these products — and fast. "We were looking to generate contacts and leads for our salespeople in a very tight geography," recalls Brian Rund, Nufarm's director of branding and marketing services.

So Nufarm developed its "Treat the Seed Right" campaign, an integrated marketing effort that blended personalized direct mail with personalized URLs (PURLs). Using multiple sources, including farm journals and dealer lists, Nufarm identified hundreds of strong sales prospects.

A strong idea takes root

The campaign had four objectives: Inform middlemen and growers about Nufarm's broad range of seed treatment products; identify those already using Nufarm products; single out those willing to meet with a sales representative; and, perhaps most important, generate new sales leads.

Early in July, personalized, full-color, 4- by 6-inch postcards with images of wheat and wheat fields on the front landed in the mailboxes of more than 1,500 dealers, distributors and growers. The postcards included the name and contact information for the Nufarm salesperson for that area.

"A great seed starts with Nufarm. Treat it right with Nufarm seed solutions," blared the green and gold lettering on the front of the card. The card also included the recipient's name, his PURL, a list of several Nufarm seed treatment products and a \$50 gift card offer.

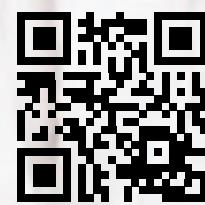
As an incentive, recipients received a Nufarm hat for visiting their personalized web pages, which included a brief flash video featuring Nufarm images and branding before being directed to a page that asked five questions covering a variety of areas like use of crops and knowledge or interest in seed treatment.

As an additional incentive, each recipient got a \$50 gift card if he agreed to a visit from a Nufarm sales representative.

"We were trying to take advantage of the 'personability' of direct mail and the PURL to get a response," Rund reveals.

Growing business from the ground up

In all, Nufarm mailed out three sets of postcards between July 5 and August 31. The second and third mailings were reminders for the non-responders.



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ALEX CAO, PHOTODISC, GETTY IMAGES
SHAW NIELSEN

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